

much time and labor. Indeed it may well be taken as a model for a State list. We note, however, that the Wheatear (*Saxicola œnanthe*) is referred to as "A European species, straggling to New England, and once taken at Boulder," Colorado, whereas it is a not uncommon bird in Greenland, Labrador, and other parts of Arctic America. We regret to see, however, that in the section devoted to the history of Colorado Ornithology, generic names are printed with a lower case initial letter, which is not only unusual and unsightly, but renders it much more difficult to individualize quickly the names of the species in a running glance through the paragraphs. For this it is hoped the author is not responsible. Typographical errors are scarce, particularly in technical names, and the paper as a whole is very creditably printed.

The announcement is made that copies may be had gratuitously on application to the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Fort Collins, Colorado. — J. A. A.

**Miller on Construction of Scientific Names.**<sup>1</sup>—This paper is designed, as stated in a note by the publication committee of the California Academy of Sciences, as "a comprehensive, and at the same time readily accessible and reliable, treatise on the rules that should govern the selection and formation of scientific names derived from Greek and Latin," the committee believing that such a treatise would prove useful to local botanists and zoölogists of Western North America for many years to come; and they might well have added, of Eastern North America as well. Says the author: "Various scientific writers have arbitrarily departed from the philologically correct method of nomenclature established by Linnaeus; moreover some difference of opinion now prevails in regard to the formation, gender and inflection of certain New Latin words derived from the Greek. Definite rules have been wanting, or at least not readily available. Accordingly, at Dr. Jordan's request, and with his kind assistance, I have undertaken to formulate a set of rules based upon philological principles and at the same time agreeing with the practice of consistent nomenclators. Ultra-purism, however, as the writing of *ai* and *oi* for the Greek *αι* and *οι* or of *k* for Greek *κ*, shall have no more consideration than the philological monstrosities produced by a Rafinesque or a Swainson."

The rules given by Prof. Miller are clear and concise, and will certainly be welcome to a large proportion of at least the younger systematists who find themselves called upon now and then to provide names for new genera and species or even higher groups. The rules are intended to give directions as to how to construct properly names derived from Greek and Latin, in future work; they are not intended to be retroactive, for

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<sup>1</sup> Scientific Names of Latin and Greek Derivation. By Walter Miller, Professor of Classical Philology, Leland Stanford Jr. University. Proc. California Academy of Sciences, 3d. Ser., Vol. I, No. 3, pp. 115-143.

the correction of past errors. As Prof. Miller, who has of course due regard for philological proprieties, well says: "We may recognize the law of priority as absolute, and retain the many monstrous and misspelled names to be found on the records of natural history, just as their makers left them. They are historic facts and serve to mark the group of animals or plants to which they apply, but these misshapen forms of words are not ornamental and they are unworthy of scholars. It is to be hoped that, in future, greater care may be taken to make words that give correctly the idea the author may have intended. . . . It costs no more to frame a name properly than to leave it a monstrosity."—J. A. A.

**Chapman's Notes on Birds Observed in Yucatan.**<sup>1</sup>—In the present paper Mr. Chapman gives the ornithological results of his short excursion to Yucatan, where, in March, 1896, he spent about three weeks at Chichen-Itza in the study of bird-life. Seventy-four species were observed, a list of which, together with critical notes and remarks on habits, are here given, preceded by a short sketch of the physical features of the region and the derivation of its avifauna.

A new genus, *Agriocharis* (p. 288), is created for the reception of the Ocellated Turkey; and an attempt is made to prove the Guatemalan Green Jay specifically distinct from the Rio Grande bird. With the latter we are unable to agree.

A very useful list of the principal contributions to Yucatan birds concludes the paper. — C. W. R.

**'Upon the Tree-Tops.'**<sup>2</sup>—Students of birds out of doors will welcome a new volume by Mrs. Miller. Her enthusiastic and careful observations of the home-life of birds have not only added to our knowledge of the habits of species whose ways we supposed were well known, but they have shown how much there is in bird-life to interest every stroller in the woods and fields. It is the human-like nature of birds that appeals to Mrs. Miller and in writing from this point of view she brings birds nearer to us and arouses a sympathetic interest in them even among readers to whom her feathered friends are strangers.

In the present volume we have accounts of the Loggerhead Shrike, Winter Wren, Yellow-breasted Chat, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and more or less extended observations on numerous other birds in chapters entitled, 'Tramps with an Enthusiast,' 'Young America in Feathers,' 'Down the Meadow,' 'In a Colorado Nook,' and 'The Idyl of an Empty

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<sup>1</sup>Notes on Birds observed in Yucatan. By Frank M. Chapman. Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, VIII, pp. 271-290, Dec. 11, 1896.

<sup>2</sup>Upon the Tree-Tops. By Olive Thorne Miller. Illustrated by J. Carter Beard. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1897. 16mo, pp. ix + 245, pll. x.